

Teaching notes

In this documentary, Buchi from Episode 4 goes to the London Language and Drama School. This is a place where students study and practice the techniques of acting. Buchi tells us about the techniques then gets involved in the lessons.

Background information

Drama schools offer training for students who plan to become professional actors and actresses. The courses offered by drama schools centre on practical work. Often, drama schools stage a performance or series of performances to build confidence in their students and also to demonstrate talent to agents and casting directors who are invited to attend.

Before you watch

- 1 Warm up** Check students remember the meanings of all of the verbs. Tell them to first read the sentences and then try to complete them with the verbs. Give them a few minutes to do this and then check the answers. You could also ask them to make new sentences using the same verbs.

Optional activity

Give students a few minutes to memorise the words. Then students take turns to test each other, covering either the translations or the verbs and trying to remember the corresponding words.

While you watch

- 2a** Play the first part of the film (00:25:11–00:26:17) and ask students to complete the sentences with the verbs. Ask students to think of any other things that actors do, e.g. *dance*, *mime*, *sing*.

Optional activity

Chose a volunteer to stand in front of the class. Whisper an action to the student (*You are fighting/running for the bus/walking in the park*, etc.). The student has to mime the action and the class guesses what the action is. The winner is the next volunteer.

- 2b** Ask students to read through Buchi's notes, then play the first part of the video again. You can pause during the video, to allow students time to complete their notes.
- 3** Play the final part of the video (00:26:18–00:27:47), then complete the rules of 'the risk game'. Check answers.
- 4** Ask students to read the sentences and try to answer true or false in pairs. Then play the whole video (00:25:11–00:27:47) again.

After you watch

5a and b Ask students to research a singer, film star or sportsperson. Ask them to complete the spidergrams in pairs. Then ask students to complete the sentences with their own ideas.

Extension activities

Lo tech Encourage students to use books or magazines to research their chosen person.

Hi tech Students with access to a computer can use the internet to research and prepare their chosen person.

Key

Before you watch

- 1 2 ran 3 jumped 4 fell 5 fight
6 standing 7 push 8 laughed

While you watch

- 2a 2 their bodies 3 run 4 jump
5 fight 6 do silly things

- 2b 2 feelings 3 story 4 walk
5 fight 6 silly 7 instruments

- 3 Student falls back. 3
Students form a circle. 1
Students in the circle push
student back into the centre. 4
One student gets into the centre. 2
4 2 F Buchi asks four students why they want to act.
3 F Sophie is one of the teachers.
4 F Sophie says trust is very important.
5 T
6 F Students must take risks.

After you watch

5a and 5b Students' own answers.

Video script

1 Introduction 00:25:11–00:26:17

Buchi 'To be, or not to be – that is the question: whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, or to take arms against a sea of troubles, and by opposing end them...'. Well, what do you think? Am I a great actor? That was from the play *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare. Now plays and films tell stories. They use words, of course, and actors say them on stage or in front of a camera. But physical action is important, too...

Actors don't only speak. They use their faces and their bodies to show their feelings and tell the story. They walk, run, jump, fight, and do silly things! The voice and the body are the actor's instruments – and actors have to learn how to use them.

I'm here at the London Language and Drama School. The students are taking an improvisation class. Let's talk to some of them.

2 Interviews and drama school 00:26:18–00:27:47

Student 1 I want to be an actress because I love the feeling of being on stage.

Student 2 You get to be part of the creation of something that's bigger than yourself.

Student 3 You get to be somebody else.

Student 4 You can explore yourself in a different way.

Buchi Sophie is one of the teachers here.

Sophie The first thing I teach my students is trust. Out of a trusting atmosphere, that is when you can take your risk, because you trust that if people do laugh, which they should, if something hasn't worked, it's not *at* you, it's *with* you. You need to be open. You need to put yourself into a state of exploration of yourself and the environment around you. I like to start with a trust exercise where one person is going to stand in the middle, and they cross their arms over, close their eyes, and they literally just fall back into the group. The group very gently push that person back into the centre, and you can take that bigger and bigger and bigger 'til the person is almost falling on the floor.

Buchi What qualities does an actor need?

Sophie You need to be prepared and willing to take a risk, and that it might fail, but you might get something quite magical from it.

Buchi Well, acting isn't easy. But it's great fun!